

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claim 5 and 7, cancel Claims 18-30 and add new Claims 34-42 as set forth below.

1. (Previously Amended) A method for filling of a plurality of syringe bodies, wherein for each syringe body the method comprises:

holding the syringe body in at least one holder;

removing a cap from a dispensing end of the syringe body during said holding step;

filling the syringe body at the dispensing end thereof after said removing step and during said holding step; and,

replacing one of the caps removed from one of said plurality of syringe bodies on the dispensing end of the syringe body after said filling step and during said holding step.

2. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

placing said cap on said dispensing end of the syringe body prior to said holding step.

3. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 2, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

sterilizing the syringe body after said placing step and prior to said holding step.

4. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 3, wherein said placing and sterilizing steps are completed at a first location and said holding, removing, filling and replacing steps are completed at a second location remote from said first location.

5. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 4, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

packaging said syringe body in a container at said first location after said placing step and prior to said holding step; and,

unpackaging said syringe body from said container at said second location prior to said holding step.

6. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 5, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

sterilizing the syringe body after said packaging step and prior to said unpackaging step.

7. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 5, further comprising:

interconnecting a flexible belt to said plurality of syringe bodies in a predetermined orientation prior to said packaging step.

8. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 7, wherein the holding, removing, filling and replacing steps are successively repeated in an automated manner for each of said plurality of syringe bodies.

9. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein for each syringe body the removing step includes:

retainably engaging said cap in a retainer; and,

moving at least one of said retainer and said at least one holder in an automated manner to affect relative movement between the cap and the dispensing end of the syringe body; and,

wherein for each syringe body the replacing step comprises:

retainably engaging said one of said caps in a retainer; and

moving said holder along a predetermined path to insert said one of said caps into the syringe body.

10. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in Claim 9, wherein for each syringe body the cap removed in said removing step is the same as the cap replaced in said replacing step.

11. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 9, wherein for each syringe body the filling step comprises:

interconnecting a fluid supply member with the dispensing end of the syringe body in an automated manner; and,

flowing fluid into the syringe body through the interconnected fluid supply member and dispensing end of the syringe body.

12. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 11, wherein for each syringe body, said removing, filling and replacing steps are completed at a first location of the syringe body.

13. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 12, wherein for each syringe body, said retainer and said fluid supply member are interconnected for tandem movement during said removing, filling and replacing steps.

14. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 11, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

first locating the syringe body at a first location for completion of said removing step;

second locating the syringe body at a second location for completion of said filling step; and,

returning the syringe body to said first location for completion of said replacing step.

15. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 11, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

sensing the position of a plunger end thereof to terminate said filling step.

16. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 11, wherein said flowing step comprises at least one of the following:

injecting said fluid into the syringe body under pressure; and,

drawing said fluid into said syringe body by retraction of a plunger comprising the syringe body.

17. (Original) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein for each syringe body the removing filling and replacing steps are completed in an automated manner.

18.-30 (Canceled)

31. (New) A method as recited in Claim 7, further comprising:

severing said flexible belt between each of said plurality of syringe bodies after said unpackaging step.

32. (New) A method as recited in Claim 31, wherein for each syringe body said severing step is completed after said removing, filling and replacing steps.

33. (New) A method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said one of the caps in the replacing step is the same as said cap in said removing step.

34. (New) A method for filling a plurality of syringe bodies, wherein for each syringe body the method comprises:

sterilizing the syringe body;

holding the sterilized syringe body in at least one holder;

removing a cap from a dispensing end of the sterilized syringe body during said holding step;

filling the sterilized syringe body at the dispensing end thereof after said removing step and during said holding step; and

replacing one of the caps removed from one of said plurality of syringe bodies on the dispensing end of the syringe body after said filling step and during said holding step.

35. (New) A method as recited in Claim 34, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

placing said cap on said dispensing end of the syringe body prior to said holding step.

36. (New) A method as recited in Claim 35, wherein for each syringe body the sterilizing step is completed after said placing step and prior to said holding step.

37. (New) A method as recited in Claim 35, wherein said placing and sterilizing steps are completed at a first location and said holding, removing, filling and replacing steps are completed at a second location remote from said first location.

38. (New) A method as recited in Claim 37, wherein for each syringe body the method further comprises:

packaging said syringe body in a container at said first location after said placing step and prior to said holding step; and,

unpackaging said syringe body from said container at said second location prior to said holding step.

39. (New) A method as recited in Claim 38, A method as recited in Claim 5, further comprising:

interconnecting a flexible belt to said plurality of syringe bodies in a predetermined orientation prior to said packaging step.

40. (New) A method as recited in Claim 39, wherein the holding, removing, filling and replacing steps are successively repeated in an automated manner for each of said plurality of syringe bodies.

41. (New) A method as recited in Claim 39, further comprising:

severing said flexible belt between each of said plurality of syringe bodies after said unpackaging step.

42. (New) A method as recited in Claim 41, wherein for each syringe body said severing step is completed after said removing, filling and replacing steps.